When I started this year, I had two very simple goals: to explore and learn about these new tools and about technology in general and to get my students on the computers more. Following are some of the things that I did and some reflections on it.

* My method of planning has completely changed. I mean, I still base my lessons on curriculum outcomes, but now when I look at these standards, instead of finding an activity or worksheet to use, I think about how I can make my lessons more interactive. My SB has made it easier for me to follow the “I do, we do, you do” method of teaching. I am able to prepare the templates ahead of time and to bring them back again and again, saving time during my lessons. I have used the SB capabilities for editing, highlighting important information, demonstrating, getting students involved in sharing their own methods of problem solving, showing real-world examples and applications of what we are learning.
* Student participation and enthusiasm has increased. Students who were often disengaged or lacked confidence to participate in discussions now want to participate because they get the opportunity to use the SB. They are now even suggesting ways to use the SB and the programs we have used when I hadn’t planned on it, or thought of using it in that way. They are starting to take ownership of their learning. They are starting to tell me what helps them learn and what doesn’t. They say things like: “Remember when you showed us how to regroup on the SB Mme? I just think of that when I’m adding.” or “When you showed us how the Earth travels around the sun with the animation on the SB I really understood. Do you have one to show us how the moon goes around the Earth?” They are also talking about these things with their parents. The evidence is that I have received several emails from parents commenting about how excited their children are. I have attached a picture of a thank you card I received that mentioned the use of technology with students.
* Trying to find resources to use with my SB led me to join Twitter. This has been both powerful and informative in my growth as a teacher. I have learned so much about using my SB effectively in my classroom. I have learned about the many tools available to teach as well as have been exposed to many different projects that wonderful teachers around the world are doing with their children. I have developed my own Personal Learning Network that answers my various needs. I have colleagues who are interested in tech integration, colleagues whose focus in developing literacy skills through the love of reading, colleagues whose focus is second language learning, colleagues who are interested in making things better for students who are gifted and those who face challenges, colleagues who are interested in educational reform to make things better for all students and finally colleagues who are just striving to become better teachers. Combining all these groups together has created for me a wonderful and powerful support group in my own development as a better teacher.
* I have had my students on the computers for many things this year. They all know how to use the SMARTBoard (which became regular center in both Guided Reading and Lecture guidée), they know how to log into the computers, both desktop and laptop computers, they have produced several Microsoft Word documents, they produced a COMIC Life project, they have searched for pictures to use for projects, and they have written their own blog: <http://kidblog.org/mmeforrestsgrade3s> Some students have taken their learning home as well and have created PDF files, digital slide shows, joined the website Shelfari with their parents to share the books they are reading with other students in our class. It has been amazing! I also created a class wiki space where we have been adding reading and learning links all year: <http://mmeforrest.wikispaces.com>

There were two completely unexpected outcomes from my participation in this SB project:

* First, being a part of this project has allowed me to feel like I am valued by my staff. Not that I wasn’t valued before, but now I feel like I have something truly unique to offer my staff and my school. I have been told several times this year that I have become somewhat the “tech expert” for the younger grades. People are coming to me with questions and I am able to answer them, or point them in the right direction. My enthusiasm for what I am doing is rubbing off onto others and they are now looking for ways to use some of the ideas with their own kids. I love being able to help others, so being a part of this project has allowed for this to happen.
* Another unexpected outcome of my participation in this project is the link that I am making between my tech learning and my M.Ed. learning. I went into my M.Ed. program with a vague idea of what I wanted to focus on: reading instruction. The more I learn about Web 2.0 and student participation/interaction, the more possibilities I see for these tools to impact student reading and writing outcomes. The more I learn, the more I read, the clearer my ideas for possible research and thesis integrating these two topics becomes. There is very little research done in this field, and even less when speaking of second language learning. Isn’t it amazing that all of this has come together?

I have loved the opportunity to be a part of this program. I honestly think that it has made me a better teacher. The blog <http://jnmfly.edublogs.org> has given the opportunity to reflect, change and learn. I have considered expanding the blog to reflect on other things education related, not just my journey with technology. Once again, the project has been AMAZING and I hope to see it continue in the future.